THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Large areas of lands containing Limestone, Dolomite, Manganese and Bauxite reserves have been reserved in Madhya Pradesh for exploitation through public sector undertakings.

(b) to (d) Public Sector Undertakings have large areas under mining leases which they are mining at present. In respect of other areas not covered by such mining leases, the Government of Madhya Pradesh has sent proposals for dereservation of such areas which are currently under consideration of the Central Government. After dereservation of such areas, the private enterpreneurs will be able to obtain mining leases.

Marble Reserves in Rajasthan

4226. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to make use of the high marble reserves in Rajasthan which is 99 per cent of the total reserves in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Marble is a minor mineral and hence development thereof is the concern of the State Governments. Mining of marble is mainly taken up in the private sector.

At present the Central Government have no such proposal under ist consideration for making use of the marble reserves in Rajasthan.

Transfer of Chrome Plant

4227. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Orissa has transferred chrome plant of Orissa Mining Corporation to Tata Undertaking last year;

(b) whether concessions were given by the State Government to Tata Unit in the deal; and

(c) what were the reasons for the said chrome plant being handed over to Tatas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(a) and (c) According to information received from the Government of Orissa, the State Government agreed to recommend the renewal of Sukinda chromite mining lease in favour of Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited (TISCO) to Government of India when it becomes due as per the Acts & Rules. The State Government has also informed that heavy accumulated losses and the poor likelihood of matters improving in the near future persuaded them to seek alternative ways of running the plant, and of the parties contacted, TISCO alone had come up with a concrete proposal which was for out-right sale of the plant and machinery.

Production of Zinc and Lead Metals

4228. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that present indigenous production of Zinc and lead metals is not sufficient to meet the demand;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what steps Government propose to take to increase the production of Zinc and lead metals in the country;

(d) the names of the private sector firms which are engaged in the production of Zinc in the country and what is their total capacity and production at present; and

(e) whether these private sector firms also propose to increase their production; if so, the details thereof?